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**Wisconsin Receives Foster Youth Homelessness Prevention Grant**

MADISON.....The outlook for Wisconsin's foster youth just got a bit brighter. Recently, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) was notified that it has received \$706,000 dollars through a two-year federal grant from the Department of Health and Human Services to improve long-term outcomes for children who have been in the foster care system.

"Foster youth who remain in the system until adulthood are too often our forgotten children. Faced with a transition out of foster care without a stable family, housing, or work experience, they often end up living on the streets. This grant allows the Department to research and implement new strategies that will lead to better outcomes for these at-risk youth." remarked DCF Secretary Eloise Anderson.

The two-year grant was awarded to the Department's Office of Youth Services, and will allow the Department to address the areas of stable housing, permanent connections, education and employment, and social-emotional well-being.

The Wisconsin Foster Youth Homelessness Prevention grant allows the Department to conduct broad research into identifying the best practices and strategies for foster youth interventions, while putting the most promising initiatives into action in Wisconsin on a smaller scale. The research and pilot programs implemented will help position Wisconsin as a national leader in providing services for older foster care youths.

"A heightened focus on older foster youth will translate into greater success in building stable employment, strong relationships, and independence for these vulnerable youth," said Wendy Henderson, Director of the Office of Youth Services.

In 2011, the Department created the Office of Youth Services to specifically address the ongoing needs of children in the foster care system, with a focus on helping older foster youth entering adulthood transition successfully into independent living as adults. Under the leadership of the Office of Youth Services, Wisconsin has established a broad-based public-private workgroup, including foster youth, to provide direction and oversight in implementing the grant.